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CSM No. 568

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CH DS
SC No. 01726/58
Copy No. _____ '73
19 March 1958

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CURRENT SUPPORT MEMORANDUM

SOVIET CIVIL DEFENSE AIR RAID DRILLS

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Air raid blackout exercises have been staged in several cities in the USSR last year, according to reports which appear reliable. 1/

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In Khabarovsk in late May and early June a four-day air raid exercise was held involving a blackout, movement of civilians to shelters, and training in fire fighting. [REDACTED] military aircraft flew over the city during the exercise--which they described as the first drill since the Korean War. 2/

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The Baltic port of Tallin was blacked out during an exercise in early September, according to [REDACTED] who stated blackout curtains were brought to his hotel room. Car lights were masked and naval vessels took part, he said. 4/

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Air raid drills reportedly were conducted the same month in Yerevan, north of Turkey. The populace there was instructed by loud-speaker to stay at home until an alarm signal was given by radio or factory whistles to enter shelters. A blackout accompanied the drill. Sources stated that the drill was related to the tense Turkish-Syrian situation. 6/ Air raid drills were reported in Baku in June 1957. 7/

The blackout drills in the USSR supplement a civil defense training program, which has been growing in scope. High Soviet officials at a February conference in Moscow covering civil defense announced that 85 percent of the population (presumably adult population was meant) had received antiatomic defense training in a ten-hour course during 1955 and 1956. They said the entire population must complete a 22-hour civil defense course by the end of 1958, and yet another training program is to be completed by 1960. 8/

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